

The Rocky Road of Love

by Spike

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Summary: My first story, about James and Lily. It's not soppy and (I think) it's got a bit of humour! R/R,

1. Default Chapter Title

> <meta name="ProgId"> The common room in Gryffindor Tower was unusually quiet for 3 o' clock on a Saturday afternoon, the reason being that it was M

Disclaimer â€" I own only Phillipa Jones, Lucy Watson, Kevin Sharpe and Prof. Kendall. The rest belong to J K Rowling. Don't sue me, I'm skint.

A/N - The story is set in James and Lily's fifth year.

The common room in Gryffindor Tower was unusually quiet for 3 o' clock on a Saturday afternoon, the reason being that it was May and most of the students were busy studying for their forthcoming exams. Of them, it could be said that the Fifth and Seventh years were working the most diligently, as the Fifth years were taking their O.W.L.'s and the Seventh years were taking their N.E.W.T's. Three such Fifth years were Lily Johnston and her two friends Phillipa Jones and Lucy Watson. The trio had pulled their chairs together near the door and were working in near silence. Lily was revising Charms and Lucy and Phillipa were both studying Potions, a class that there were both abysmally bad at.

The silence was broken when the door was flung open and Sirius Black charged in. Tall, with dark hair and dark eyes, 16 year old Sirius never did anything quietly. Walking past the three girls he winked at Lily, ruffled Lucy's hair and grabbed the notes Phillipa was reading from.

'What's this?' he asked, holding the paper out of reach of Phillipa's hands. 'How to make a Shrinking Solution.' He read out loud and started laughing. 'Honestly Flip, we learnt that potion in the Second

year, can you still not do it?' Phillipa succeeded in grabbing her notes back and scowled at Sirius.

'It's all very well for you Sirius, being such a clever clogs, but we've got important exams in a couple of weeks and some of us do have to work to get good marks. And don't call me Flip!' Sirius laughed again and sauntered across the room to join his two friends, James Potter and Remus Lupin. He only called her Flip because it annoyed her so much - on her first day at Hogwarts, she had introduced herself as Flipper Jones and the nickname had lasted for five years, but it had been shortened to Flip.

Lily and Lucy grinned sympathetically at Phillipa as she sighed and sat back down, trying to ignore the interruption to her work. But she wasn't the only Gryffindor Fifth year to be interrupted by Sirius' arrival. Across the room, James Potter had spent the last half hour staring over at Lily. Oh, nobody knew of course. To all intent and purposes James had his nose buried in his Transfiguration notes but his head was angled so he could look at Lily out of the corner of his eye. James had had a very pleasant time watching as Lily had absentmindedly twirled a lock of her curly hair round her finger as she studied. The sun beaming through the windows was making her dark red hair shiny, and James would occasionally glimpse her bright green eyes as she looked up to make the odd comment to her friends.

James looked at Sirius in disgust as he walked toward him and Remus. Now he would have to stop looking at Lily. He didn't dare look whilst Sirius was around, as he knew how quick and clever his friend was and he didn't want Sirius finding out that he liked Lily. Sirius would have a field day if he found out!

'Working hard?' asked Sirius as he slumped into the chair next to James.

'Er, yes, just reading through my Transfiguration notes.' James mumbled, blushing slightly because he realised he hadn't looked at them once. Sirius looked at him keenly. Roughly translated, he thought, that means he's been staring at Lily Johnston for the past hour. Honestly, James must think he, Sirius, was a right idiot not to have guessed that he liked Lily.

'Do you want me to test you?' Sirius asked wickedly, knowing full well James hadn't read his notes.

'Oh, er no thanks, Sirius. Actually,' he said, glancing at his watch 'I promised Kevin Sharpe that I would meet him at the Quidditch pitch in 10 minutes. Got to put a bit of practice in if we're to beat the Slytherins next week.' James was the Gryffindor Seeker, and also the team captain. 'Actually, Sirius, I think you should come to practice, too. You are one of the Beaters. And maybe you could use some of the famous Black charm on Flip and get her to come too!' Phillipa was one of the Chasers on the team, and she was an excellent player and a natural on a broomstick. Sirius grinned lazily. 'Yeah, I'll come, and I'll bring Flip but I need a quick word with Remus first so I'll be along in about 15 minutes. I'll meet you on the pitch.'

'Well, don't be too long,' said James standing up and striding towards the stairs that lead to his dormitory, and allowing himself a quick, last glance at Lily before he climbed the stairs to change into his Quidditch robes.

As soon as James had left the common room to meet Kevin, Sirius pulled his chair closer to Remus Lupin's.

'Well,' he asked, in a low conspiratorial voice, 'what happened while I was gone?' Remus lowered his book with a grin. 'Oh, you know, the usual. He pretended to be stuck in his book but he couldn't take his eyes off her. I know, because I was watching him watching her!' Sirius laughed and said 'You know, I wonder why he hasn't told us that he likes her. We are his best friends, after all.'

'Well,' replied Remus, 'he probably knew that you would pull his leg about it!' Sirius managed to look injured at this suggestion, then he grinned and said 'Yeah, probably! But,' he considered 'I've been watching young Lily lately, and I think she likes James as much as he likes her. And I propose we try to get the two of them together.'

'Are you sure she likes him, though?' asked Remus.

'Oh definitely,' replied Sirius. 'I mean, she's matey with all of us but I've noticed that she seems suddenly shyer when she talks to James. And I've noticed that she even smiles at him differently. She grins when she talks to us, but it's like a secret, half smile when she talks to James! I guarantee that she's as batty over him as he is over her!' Remus considered this silently. Finally he spoke.

'Well, we could try, I suppose. Have you any ideas?

'Oh yes,' said Sirius, an evil grin slowly spreading over his face, 'but only after I've had a little bit of fun first....'

Three days later, and breakfast time in the Great Hall was a babel of noise. Lily was playing with her porridge with a dreamy expression on her face. James and Sirius had their heads close together discussing the forthcoming Quidditch match with Slytherin. Occasionally, one of them would lift their head up to hiss instructions to fourth year Kevin Sharpe. He was new on the team this year and was nervous about playing against Slytherin, who had the reputation of being the dirtiest team in the school. Lucy and Phillipa were talking about their Potions class, as they usually did on a Tuesday morning, because that was their first lesson after breakfast.

'I hope today's lesson goes a bit better than last week's' said Lucy. 'I thought Professor Kendall was going to cry when my potion blew up and splattered crocodile brains over him!' Phillipa sniggered at the memory of their Potions master standing in the middle of the Potions dungeon, covered in crocodile slime.

'You know,' continued Lucy, 'if only we didn't have so much pride, self respect and functioning brain cells, I believe I know the perfect plan to scrape us through our Potions exam.'

'Oh yeah, what's that then?' asked Phillipa, more than a little curious. Remus Lupin, who was listening in to their conversation, looked at Lucy searchingly. He privately thought divine intervention was the only way they would pass the exam.

'Well,' said Lucy, lowering her voice, 'it's completely out of the

question of course, but we could of asked Severus Snape to help us out, you know, give us a bit of coaching, that kind of thing.' Severus Snape was a Slytherin fifth former, whose excellence in Potions was only exceeded by his immense dislike of Gryffindors, especially James, Sirius, Remus and their friend Peter Pettigrew.

Remus burst out laughing. 'Snivelling Severus! You would have to be desperate to ask him for help.' James and Sirius, who had by this time finished discussing their team tactics, joined their friend in laughter. Phillipa shuddered in disgust.

'Ugh! I'd rather eat my own flesh than ask Snape for help. He is such a creep!'

'Eat your own flesh?' Sirius said, looking excited. 'I could help you with that.'

'In your dreams, pal!' responded Phillipa.

'Oh Flip, if only I could tell you about my dreams, you're in them, you knowâ€|.' said Sirius, leering over the table at her.

'Get lost, moron.' replied Phillipa good naturedly, bantering with him as only she knew how.

Lily, meanwhile was not listening to this exchange of words. Oh no, she was far too engrossed in her current favourite daydream, the one where James Potter dropped to his knees and promised to cherish her for all eternity (fanciful stuff, certainly, but that's daydreams for you!). Lily couldn't remember the point when she'd started to look on James as more than a friend. She wished she could stop herself from blushing whenever he spoke to her, wished that the fluttering in her stomach would stop whenever he was near her. It was weird, she knew whenever he was near her without even seeing him â€" the hairs on her arms would stand up and she felt a strange awareness that she'd never felt before. It took most of her concentration to act and appear normally throughout the day. Really, it would be too awful for words if he found out she liked him. And it would be even worse if Sirius found out!

Lily's daydreams were rudely interrupted by the arrival of the post, and hundreds of owls began swooping towards their owners. A letter dropped down in front of Lily and she picked it up curiously. She wasn't expecting anything as her parents had sent her a lengthy letter only yesterday. Opening it, she found a very brief note inside:

Lily

Please meet me by the Whomping Willow at 6.00 o'clock this evening. Come alone. I promise it will be to your advantage.

Lily studied the note carefully. Strange, she thought, I don't recognise the writing. She looked up and quickly glanced around the table. Who could it be from, she wondered, and in her heart hoped. You know who you want it to be from, said her conscience, James, that's who! As if by magic, James glanced up from reading his own letter and caught her eye. He smiled at Lily, and Lily (in seventh heaven!) smiled back shyly. James went back to reading his letter and

Lily went back to dreaming. Sirius watched all this and smiled "Lily wasn't the only one to receive that exact same message this morning!

Leaving the Great Hall after breakfast, the friends wandered slowly towards Gryffindor Tower to pick up their books and equipment for the Potions lesson. Sirius had come up with a plan, and he was now enlarging on it.

'Flip, I know how bad you and Lucy are at Potions__'

'Thank you!' said Lucy, interrupting him.

'__so I've come up with a plan to help you both,' he said, grinning at them.

'Which is?' asked Remus.

'Well, Lucy could partner up with you, Remus, and Flip can be my partner. I know we're not as good as Slimy Snape but we're not too bad, are we?' Phillipa and Lucy both concurred that this was a good plan, and the four of them moved off. James turned towards Lily.

'In that case, Lily, would you do me the honour of being my partner in Potions?'

'Nothing would give me greater pleasure, James, than to be your partner.' Oo, slight play on words there, thought Lily, but nothing ventured nothing gained. James smiled and was just about to reply whenâ€|.

'But what about me? You two are both good at Potions, but I'm not! Oh, I can't work by myself. What will I do? James, you must help me!' squealed Peter Pettigrew. James sighed. Where had he sprung up from?

'Peter, it's only one lesson, I'm sure__' he began.

'James, you know how much Professor Kendall hates me, please please, I really need your help. Lily won't mind, will you Lily?' Peter's eyes were begging her to say no.

'Er, I suppose not,' she agreed reluctantly, because basically she was a nice girl. James sighed again and allowed himself to be dragged away by Peter. She saw them turn the corner and as they disappeared she allowed herself a howl of rage and a quick stamp of the foot. Lily wasn't a redhead for nothing, you know. Is it too much, she wondered, to hope to spend three hours with the boy of my dreams? I might have been able to find out if he sent that note. You'll find out soon enough, replied her conscience, and Peter really does need James' helpâ€|

Because she'd been dawdling along, Lily was the last person to arrive at the dungeon and to her horror, found the only unoccupied seat was next to Severus Snape. She dumped her bag on the floor and sat down. Really, this was too much! Could the day get any worse? From the promise of sitting next to James to the reality of being stuck next to Snape. But because she was a nice girl she turned around and gave him a weak smile.

James saw her smile, and felt furious! Oh, not at Lily and not even at Snape but at Peter who was sat next to him. Really, if Peter hadn't interfered, he, James could of spent the morning talking to Lily, trying to find out if she liked him, even remotely, in the same way that he liked her. He thought she might. Now, it would have to wait until later. He glanced around. Sirius and Flip were sitting at the table behind him and Peter and Remus and Lucy were sitting to the side of him. Poor Lily was stuck at the opposite side of the dungeon. James consoled himself with the thought that at least he could worship her from afar, and perhaps smile at her if he caught her eye.

But if James wasn't happy, Severus Snape was. As much as he hated the Gryffindors there was one of them that he liked, and that was Lily Johnston. As much as he was proud to be a Slytherin, even Snape had to admit that the Slytherin girls were a grim looking bunch â€" none of them came close to Lily Johnson in terms of prettiness. As Lily smiled at Snape as she sat down he thought to himself, yep that's it, she fancies me and I can't say I blame her. Severus puffed out his chest, smiled his oily smile and smoothed back his even oilier hair. Yet another passenger for the Snape Love Train he thought â€" woo woo, all aboard, tickets please! Perhaps she's the one who__

'Sorry did you say something?' Lily asked, her golden voice breaking into his vile thoughts.

'Er no, I don't think so. What do you mean?' he answered.

'Well, it was like a funny noise, a bit like the Hogwarts Express really.' Snape had the grace to blush.

'No, it definitely wasn't me. But listen, now we're talking tell me, what does a nice girl like you do on her nights off?' He leered at her in what he assumed was an alluring fashion. Oh no! He's not coming on to me, is he, she thought, looking around in desperation. James caught her eye and grinned and she grinned back. It's going to be a long three hours, she thought.

Well, to cut a long lesson short:

James caught Lily's eye and smiled a lot.

Lily smiled back and daydreamed about James a lot.

Snape preened, and did his best to chat Lily up (a hell of a lot!).

Sirius and Phillipa laughed a lot.

Lucy and Remus didn't blow up the potion.

Peter just squealed. A lot.

2. Default Chapter Title

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Lily hurried away from the Potions dungeon as soon as the lesson had

finished. Three hours of Severus Snape whispering sweet nothings in her ear had played havoc with her nerves. To make matters worse, Snape's greasy head had brushed (deliberately? Lily wasn't quite sure) against her cheek as they had bent their heads over the cauldron. The desire to scrub her face clean was overwhelming, and she rushed to the bathroom to wash. By the time she entered the Great Hall lunch had started. She slid into the seat next to Phillipa.

'Was it a bad morning?' asked James sympathetically.

'It was worse than bad!' replied Lily. 'It was complete hell. He kept winking at me__' Remus mimicked being sick '___and for some strange reason, kept on calling me Tiger Lily! I felt like shoving his head into his cauldron!'

'Sounds like someone's got a crush on you!' crowed Sirius loudly. James glared at him and Phillipa landed a well aimed kick on his shin.

'Ow! What?' he said, in an aggrieved tone. 'What did I say? Anyway Lily,' he continued, 'it couldn't of been too bad. I mean, at least your partner knew what he was doing.'

'And what do you mean by that?' demanded Phillipa hotly. 'I wasn't that bad today!'

'No,' agreed Sirius 'I've seen you a lot worse. Like that day we made the Vanishing solution and you spilt yours all over Kendall's robes, and he ran out of the dungeon because his trousers had disappeared.' They all laughed at the memory.

'To be fair though, Kendall had to shoulder some of the blame. I mean, if he hadn't been so stupid as to leave his wand in his trouser pocket he could easily of magicked his clothes back!' said Lily, loyally sticking up for her friend.

'Ugh, I still have nightmares about him, standing there in those awful pink underpants!' said Lucy, cringing in recollection.

'Well Flip, I don't mind volunteering myself.' Said Sirius, a big smirk on his face.

'Volunteering for what?' she asked suspiciously.

'To help you practice making the Vanishing Solution again! Just think, you, me and the solution. With any luck you'll spill it over yourself this time!'

Sirius grinned lasciviously at her from across the table. James and Remus sniggered whilst Phillipa glared at him.

'Really Sirius! She snapped. 'Where do you keep your mind?'

'Well,' he said, patting his hands over his body and down his legs, 'it's here somewhere. I know!' he suggested brightly. 'Why don't you help me find it, Flip? Later on tonight, maybe? Bring the Vanishing solution with you.' His dark eyes gleamed in anticipation as Phillipa continued to glare at him. She suddenly laughed.

'Get stuffed, idiot.'

The afternoon dragged by for James. Sitting in Muggle Studies he finally made the decision to ask Lily out on a date, and tonight was the night he would do it. Although he felt nervous, he was also excited. What if she says yes? He grinned happily to himself. But what if she says no? He scowled in annoyance. No, he couldn't let that happen, didn't dare think it could happen. With difficulty he dragged his attention back to the lesson. He sighed. At least Lily wasn't in this class to distract him further.

The Gryffindor common room after lessons. Phillipa and Lucy were curled up on one of the sofas discussing the Hogsmeade visit this coming Saturday. James, Sirius, Remus and Peter were sitting on the wide windowsill nearby. Remus was helping Peter with his Defence Against the Dark Arts homework and James and Sirius, surprise surprise, were discussing the Quidditch game that would take place on Saturday morning. In fact, James was so caught up in the conversation he didn't realise Lily wasn't there.

Lily, meanwhile, was in her dormitory, critically studying her reflection in the mirror. She contemplated raiding Lucy's make up bag to try and enhance her looks a bit. Her elder sister Petunia had once told her that a woman could never wear enough rouge and mascara. Lily thought about this and stopped herself from reaching for Lucy's make up. Look where rouge and mascara had gotten Petunia – engaged to be married to the fattest, most boring man in the whole of Surrey, Vernon Dursley! No, Lily didn't need make up tonight. Excitement had put a sparkle in her eye and a glow to her face. After one last glance in the mirror, she quietly left her dormitory and crept out of the common room without anyone seeing her. It was 5.50 pm. She slowly made her way out of the castle, her stomach churning with nerves.

'So,' said Sirius, 'bearing in mind all we've just said I think we should go and put a couple of hours practice in.'

'Er, not just now if you don't mind Sirius.' replied James. 'There's something really important that I've been putting off for days that I've got to do.' He made to get up from the windowsill.

'But you never refuse to practice!' said Sirius in a disbelieving tone.

'I know,' replied James 'but this is really important. Listen though, I might be able to catch up with you later. If it's not too dark we can practice then.' He headed towards the door.

'Wait!' shrieked Sirius, jumping down from the windowsill. 'I'll come with you.'

'No! You can't. Sorry, but you just can't.' And with that James left the room. Sirius gave a howl of rage and held his head in his hands. Looking up, he saw Phillipa and Lucy staring at him in curiosity. Remus moved towards him.

'What's up with you? Why are you screeching?' he asked. Sirius looked at him, his eyes full of horror.

'I can't tell you here.' he mumbled. 'Come upstairs, I'll tell you there.' The pair of them walked up to their dormitory, Phillipa and

Lucy watching avidly.

'I wonder what's happening there?' said Lucy.

'Who can explain the workings of Sirius Black's mind?' replied Phillipa.

Remus and Sirius entered the dormitory and checked that it was empty, which it was.

'So what's happening?' asked Remus, sitting down on the edge of his bed.

'Well,' said Sirius slowly, 'do you remember what we were talking about on Saturday? About getting James and Lily together?'

'Yes, I remember.'

'Well, I devised a plan and sort of put it in to action.'

'What kind of plan?' Remus questioned warily. He knew from past experience that most of Sirius' plans were either downright stupid or downright dangerous.

'It's Snape's fault!' Sirius blurted out defensively.

'Hold on. What on earth has Snape got to do with James and Lily?' asked Remus.

'Well, remember last month when I played that little trick on him and he grassed me up to McGonagall?'

'What, you mean the time you held him down and made him swallow that Fast Hair Growing potion, and he spent the next week looking like a gorilla from London Zoo? That trick?'

'Er, yeah, that trick.' said Sirius. 'Well anyway,' he continued quickly 'I was thinking of ways to get James and Lily together and also thinking of ways to get Snape back, when I hit upon a brilliant plan!' Remus groaned.

'I dread asking, but what was the plan?' he asked.

'Well, I decided to kill two birds with one stone. I sent Lily a note asking her to go to the Whomping Willow at 6.00 pm, hoping that she'd think it was from James.' said Sirius.

'Oh I see. And I suppose you sent the same note to James and he would think it was off Lily?' replied Remus.

'Not quite,' Sirius mumbled, 'I sent it to Snape.'

Downstairs, in the common room, the peace and quiet was shattered by a scream of 'Sirius, you prat!!!'

Remus looked at Sirius.

'OK, you're going to have to help me out here. Where's the logic in your plan?'

'Well, it's simple really, brilliant but simple. I happen to know that Snape has got the hots for Lily. I also know that she thinks he's a slimeball. So they meet at the Whomping Willow, he thinks that she wrote him a note asking him to meet her. He's so conceited he thinks she fancies him! He declares his love for her, and she tells him to sod off, bringing about his downfall and humiliation. I reckoned that Snape would probably turn nasty at this point, and it was at this exact moment that me and James would turn up, passing the Whomping Willow on our way to the Quidditch pitch. James would then proceed to rescue his damsel in distress and hopefully punch Snape on the nose whilst doing it! She would fall into his arms and be eternally grateful for being rescued from Sneaky Snape. Simple, but brilliant.'

Remus stared at Sirius with an incredulous look on his face. Finally he spoke.

'Congratulations Sirius! Your stupidest plan yet!'

'I don't think so.' said Sirius, looking aggrieved.

'But haven't you spotted the flaw in your plan yet? The fact that James hasn't gone to the Quidditch pitch, and for all we know Lily could still be stuck with Snape!' They looked at each other in mounting horror.

'Oh no!' they shouted, making a mad dash towards the door.

The peace and quiet of the common room was shattered once again as Sirius and Remus clattered down the stairs, tore through the room and out through the door.

'Prats.' said Phillipa.

Meanwhile, Lily had arrived at the Whomping Willow. The mysterious note sender "please let it be James- hadn't turned up yet. She sat down on the warm grass a short distance from the willow and arranged herself into a (hopefully!) come-hither position. Shoulders back and chest out Lily, she told herself. Plucking a daisy from the grass, she was studying it carefully when she sensed a slight movement behind her. She was just about to turn around and face whoever when two hands covered her eyes and a voice whispered in her ear.

'Guess who.' Lily was in a quandary. Oh no, this didn't feel right at all! The hands, they felt sweaty and clammy and surely that was bad breath she smelt when he had whispered.

'I don't know,' she mumbled, unsure of herself and unsure of the mystery person.

'Oh, you little tease! You know who it is.' The hands moved from her eyes to her shoulders and she felt herself being swung around and coming face to face with Severus Snape. Disappointment coursed through her veins, severe disappointment that it wasn't James, but also relief, relief that James wasn't a sweaty beast with halitosis.

'Severus,' she whispered weakly, 'why are you here?'

'Don't be coy, little Tiger. We both know why I'm here, don't we? But

why waste time talkingâ€|' Nothing in her life could of prepared Lily for the following, rather distressing events! Snape launched himself at her and pressed his lips against hers. For one awful moment, Lily realised that it wasn't just his hands that were wet. Gathering her wits and all the strength she could muster, she pushed at his chest and managed to force their lips apart, not bad going as Snape's lips had the sticking power of a giant, flesh-eating leech.

'Severus, what do you think you're doing?!' she shrieked.

'It's ok, Tiger Lily, you don't have to hold backâ€|I like my women fast.' he murmured greasily. Women? she wondered. Who is he trying to kid?

'Fast! I'm surprised your 'women' want to get out of first gear if this is the way you behave!' she shouted. His eyes narrowed coldly.

'What's the problem?' he asked. 'You fancy me, I fancy you, you asked me to meet you hereâ€|'

'One, I most definitely do not fancy you! Two, I did not ask to meet you!' she yelled at him.

'Oh, so what's this then?' he asked, pulling out a letter from his robes. She took it and read it silently. It was exactly the same as the one she had been sent, apart from the difference in the names. Lily pulled her note out of her robes and showed it to him.

'Looks like somebody is having fun at our expense, Severus,' she said, sadly.

'Potter!' he hissed, 'that's who!'

'No!' Lily denied hotly. 'James would never do anything like that!'

'Your faith is touching,' he sneered, 'but look at the facts. He hates me, and he set me up to make me look stupid!'

'No,' said Lily, uncertainty edging her voice.

'Yes!' he insisted. 'I wondered why he kept smirking over at us in Potions today. No doubt he's hiding in the bushes somewhere, having a good laugh at our expense!' Oh God, surely not she thought. Was this the reason for all of his grins, this awful joke?

She looked at Snape. He must feel as bad as she did and she felt dreadful.

'Severus, I'm sorry about all of this.' She tried to get up but his hand fastened itself around her wrist, preventing her. She looked into his black eyes, and found to her horror that he had slipped back into his 'Love Machine' mode.

'Sweet Lily, let's turn the table on Potter and take this opportunity toâ€|cultivate our friendship.' This was the final straw for Lily. With a hiss of fury she dragged her arm away, pushed herself to her feet and strode off, only after she had screamed 'Sod off, slimeball!'

James had looked in all of Lily's usual haunts, but he still couldn't find her. He'd been to the library, the Charms classroom and the Owlery and there'd been no sign of her. He was absolutely desperate to find her before he lost his nerve. He decided to wander down towards the lake in case she had gone there for some peace and quiet. If he still couldn't find her he would go back to the castle and enlist Sirius and Remus' help in finding her. He set off through the grounds, keeping his eyes peeled for her. Nearing the lake, he finally saw her. She was walking towards him.

'Lily, thank goodness. I've been looking for you.' he said, grinning at her. That bloody grin again, she thought savagely. Keeping tight hold of her temper she replied softly, 'I bet you have.'

'Well, there's something I want to tell you,' he said.

'I bet there is.' she replied. He looked at her confusedly. She wasn't making this easy for him. He cleared his throat.

'Well, the thing is__' he started, but was cut off as her index finger gently pressed against his lips.

'Wait James,' she said, 'there's something I need to tell you first, but you must close your eyes whilst I tell you.' James looked into her eyes, they were sparkling and bright and shone like emeralds. At that moment, if she'd asked him to die for her he would. He closed his eyes and waitedâ€¦..what he didn't expect was a punch in the face! Pain exploded in his cheek and he staggered backwards, clutching his face. He only just managed to stay on his feet. Opening his eyes he stared at Lily in bewilderment.

'Lily, what the hell are you playing at?!' he shouted, angry and confused. Lily was glaring at him, her body was shaking and her hands were barely controlled balled fists, clenched at her side.

'That's for being a complete git!' she screamed. 'I know exactly what you're up to, and I can't believe I thought you were my friend and I hate you so much. Don't you ever try to talk to me again or I'll give you a lot more than a black eye! And if you don't know what I'm talking about ask Severus Snape!' With that, she swung on her heel and stormed off. James stared after her in bemusement. There was no way he was going after her, and he only knew two things for sure â€" she was annoyed about something, and that she had a powerful right hook.

He was still standing there when Sirius and Remus found him.

'What happened to you?' asked Remus, taking in his dazed expression and his rapidly swelling black eye.

'I'm not sure, really.' he replied quietly. 'I ran into Lily, she punched me in the face, told me she hated me and then ran off. I don't know why.' He looked at his two friends. Remus looked sympathetic, but Sirius wouldn't meet his eye.

'I think Sirius has something to tell you.' said Remus.

'Er, yes. The thing is James, now don't get mad but I think it may be my fault__'

'Sirius, what have you done?' demanded James. Sirius started backing away, holding out his hands in a conciliatory way as James advanced on him with a murderous gleam in his eye. Sirius' nerve suddenly disappeared and he turned and fled.

'Sirius!!' howled James, as he took to his heels after him

A/N " Part 3 may follow.

Will Lily forgive James?

Will James forgive Sirius?

Will Sirius continue to perv around Phillipa?

Will Snape get his revenge?

3. Default Chapter Title

> <meta name="ProgId"> Disclaimer " I only own Phillipa, Lucy, Kevin

Disclaimer " I only own Phillipa and Lucy. J K R owns all the good ones!

Note to Aziraphale " Cool! I actually live in Gateshead now, but I am a SAFC season ticket holder (West Stand). I hate the skunks, hope you do too!!

The next morning, and breakfast time for the Gryffindor Fifth years was a quiet and subdued affair. James, Sirius and Remus had turned up in grim silence. All three showed signs of recently being in the wars " James with his black eye inflicted by Lily, Sirius had a fat lip inflicted by James and Remus had a lump the size of a pigeon's egg on his forehead, also inflicted by James when Remus had tried to pull him off Sirius. Of Lily, there was no sign. Phillipa and Lucy exchanged glances. The atmosphere was oppressive, and neither of them felt inclined to break the silence. Thankfully, Remus came to the rescue.

'So, where's Lily this morning?' he asked. Phillipa looked relieved that someone had finally spoke. James continued eating his breakfast, careful not to show any interest in the conversation but curious to know where she was. Probably out beating up innocent villagers in Hogsmeade, he thought sourly.

'She told us she wasn't hungry this morning and didn't want any breakfast. Looking back, she seemed a bit pale, didn't she Lucy?' answered Phillipa. Lucy nodded in agreement. Phillipa gazed at the three boys. Honestly, she had never seen them like this before! James looked pale and tense, Sirius looked unhappy and Remus, well, at least he was trying to act normally but you could tell he was a bit strained. But Sirius " what a revelation. Usually he was bouncing around like a rubber ball and full of chat but today his eyes had scarcely left his plate.

'Look, don't kill me boys but what on earth have you been up to? Have you been fighting or something?' she asked curiously.

'No!' the three of them denied quickly, at the same time.

'Er, I walked into a door.' lied James, rather unconvincingly.

'A door, right,' murmured Phillipa in a disbelieving tone.
'Sirius?'

'Well, I was walking beside James and I didn't see the door either.' he replied.

'I see.' said Phillipa. 'So Remus, are you a door victim too?'

'In a way.' he answered. 'I was walking behind them and accidentally smacked my forehead off the back of James' head as he, you know, walked into the door.' Phillipa was relieved to see the tension drain from James' face, and a ghost of a smile flit across Sirius' lips.

'Sirius!' implored Phillipa. 'Please cheer up! You're beginning to freak me out by being so quiet.'

'Sorry Flip, but it's hard to be happy when you're suffering.' he said, mournfully.

'Suffering?' she repeated. 'How? Can I help in anyway?' There was definite concern in her voice.

'Well, you could try kissing it better.' he murmured throatily.

'What?!' she demanded.

'This!' he said, pulling at his swollen lip. 'I'm suffering from the pain and I'm sure if you kissed it better it would help. It doesn't matter if it doesn't work first time. You can keep trying as long as you like, I don't mind!' James burst out laughing, and slapped Sirius on the back.

'He's back!' he said. 'You can't keep a good man down.' Sirius turned towards James and smiled, a smile that James returned with interest. After all, you couldn't let a woman come between you and your best friend, could you? The tension had now completely left the table.

'Well, Flip,' Sirius pressed on, his good humour now fully restored, 'how about it?'

'Sirius, you are impossible!' she replied, looking over at him. What she saw both shocked and surprised her. His eyes seemed darker than ever, black almost and they were staring directly into her own, burning and intense. She felt a frisson go through her body, a feeling she'd never before experienced but not an unpleasant feeling. Confused, she looked away and broke eye contact.

'Sirius,' she replied sweetly, striving to act normally, 'I'd as soon as kiss a dog'

'That can be arranged.' he drawled, smiling his trademark lazy grin.

After breakfast they rushed back to the common room to pick up their book for their next lesson. Walking through the door, the first person James saw was Lily. She looked up and blue ice collided with green flames. James immediately looked away and bounded up the stairs to his dormitory. He was scrabbling away in his bedside locker when he heard someone move up beside him. Looking around, he saw Sirius with a troubled expression on his face.

'James, look I'm sorry about everything that's gone on__' he started to say but James cut him off.

'Sirius, just forget about it. I know you were trying to help and it went a bit wrong, but you've apologised to me, and I'm sorry about your lip so we're evens, ok?'

'But I can explain to Lily what happened, and she'll forgive you and then you can finally get together.'

'But that's the problem, Sirius, don't you see? She's got nothing to forgive me for because I didn't do anything wrong. She obviously doesn't have any trust in me or she would of asked me about it instead of listening to that creep Snape. I love her so much I felt as if she'd ripped my heart out last night but I can't be with her if she has no faith in me. I don't want you saying anything about last night to her.' Sirius looked on in dismay. All this was his fault and he wasn't getting a chance to put it right.

Lily had been doing a lot of soul searching whilst the others were at breakfast. Like a lot of red headed people she had a quick and fiery temper but as quickly as it flared up it died back down. Last night, after she had punched James she had gone straight up to her dormitory and crawled into bed, the events of the evening flashing around her brain. In fact, she had had no sleep that night, so troubled had her thoughts been. But sitting in the empty common room that morning, her thoughts had finally reached a conclusion: she was in the wrong. She had thought James guilty of a nasty trick and she hadn't even the gumption to accuse him of it to his face. No, she had taken the word of James' arch enemy, a boy who hated him and wanted to discredit him at every opportunity. She had hit him, told him she hated him and all without telling him why. Lily knew that she had to apologise unreservedly. She still didn't know who had set her up, but in the cold light of day she realised that James would never be that cruel. In all the years they had been friends he'd always been nice to her.

Lily got her chance to apologise during morning break. James had blanked her during first lesson, and he had rushed out of the classroom as soon as the lesson was over. Standing in the corridor, Lily made a grab at Sirius as he left the class.

'Sirius,' she implored, 'please I need a word with you.' Sirius looked unhappy, all this was his fault. He drew her over towards the window.

'Sirius, I don't know if James has said anything to you about what's happened, but I really need to speak to him urgently, and I was wondering if you knew where he was.'

'I don't think it's a great idea to talk to him at the moment Lily.'

It might be best if you let him calm down for a few days.' he told her gently.

'This can't wait, Sirius! I've done something dreadful to him, and the sooner I apologise the better. If he accepts my apology I might even start liking myself again.' Sirius debated with himself. It wasn't a secret that James had gone to the broom shed to give his broom the once over before Saturday's game.

'Lily,' he said carefully, 'if I tell you where he is, do you promise not to tell him that I told you where he was, just in case?

'Yes, no problem, just tell me, please.'

'At the broom shed.'

James was engrossed in his broom and the first he knew he wasn't alone was when he felt a small hand gently touch his shoulder. He looked up startled, and saw Lily standing beside him. His heart leapt at the sight of her, although he wished it wouldn't. He stood up, wiping his hands on his robes.

'Lily,' he nodded to her by way of greeting. He noticed that she was avoiding looking at him.

'James, I have something to say to you but please don't interrupt. I have to get this off my chest.'

'Ok,' he agreed, 'say what you want to say.'

'Well, yesterday I went completely off at the deep end with you. I accused you, not to your face but in my own mind, of a terrible trick and I never gave you the chance to defend yourself. I tricked you into closing your eyes so I could wallop you and then I did the worst thing ever; I lied to you and told you that I hated you and that couldn't be further from the truth. I hope you'll forgive me and I hope we can still be friends but I understand if you don't want to.' She glanced upwards and looked at his face. It was blank. Her heart sunk, he wasn't going to forgive her.

'I'm so sorry,' she whispered, and before she could stop herself, leant forward on tiptoe and gently kissed his face where she had hit him. He stood there, staggered, as she turned and walked away.

He was staring at her walking away when Sirius and Remus walked up.

'Was that Lily?' asked Remus.

'Yes it was.' replied James, still staring after her, a thoughtful look on his face.

'What did she say?' asked Sirius. 'Do we have anything to celebrate?'

'You know lads, I think we might!' James' face broke into a grin and he ran off in the direction that Lily had taken.

'Lily!' he shouted. 'Wait!' She turned around in surprise and saw James running towards her. Hope burned in her heart, and as she saw

him get closer she saw he was smiling. She felt as though a weight had been lifted from her shoulders and smiled back as he caught up with her. He stopped within 1 foot of her, smiling.

'Lily, you must know how much I like you.' he said, blushing slightly. She looked away, shyly.

'Me too,' she said, 'I mean, I like you a lot too.'

'Does that meanâ€¦|'

'I think it does, James.' He whooped with joy as she burst out laughing and flung her arms around him with happiness.

'Lily, you've made me so happy,' he told her, before lowering his head and claiming her lips in a kiss so stirring it took her breath away.

Sirius and Remus looked on from a distance.

'What did I tell you?' bragged Sirius. 'My plan worked after all.'

'Remind me never to ask you to set me up!' Remus retorted, picking up James' broom and returning it to the shed.

'Well, actually, now that you mention it, I know the perfect girlâ€¦|' started Sirius.

'No! For the love of God, no! Whoever it is, I'm not interested! I can sort my own love life out, thanks very much!' shouted Remus, panicking.

'Ok, ok,' laughed Sirius, before continuing. 'The only drawback in the Lily â€" James plan was not seeing Snape's face as he made a total fool of himselfâ€¦|' The pair of them began walking slowly back towards the school, their voices fading. Neither of them noticed the dark figure lurking near the broom shed: Severus Snape. He stood, staring after them.

'So,' he hissed to himself, 'Black, not Potterâ€¦|I'll get even, just you seeâ€¦|'

A/N â€" sorry, but there is one more part to go. I didn't intend to write a mini series but Sirius and Phillipa started to write their own story and I think it deserves an end!!

4. Default Chapter Title

> <meta name="ProgId"> Disclaimer â€" You know who's mine

Disclaimer â€" You know who's mine and who's not.

The casual observer would never know that Lily and James were now a couple. Now they were together they had no reason to stare at each other furtively, and the Gryffindor Fifth years silently rejoiced in the fact that they didn't resort to the nauseating habit of calling each other foolish love names like 'Love Bunny' and

'Jamesie-Wamesie'. Indeed, the only times they even knew they were together were by their absences in the common room. Then Lily would walk in by herself, her eyes sparkling and cheeks glowing, closely followed by James, who was normally red faced and wearing a grin which threatened to split his face in two. Occasionally his glasses would be a bit steamed up, which amused Sirius no end. Fortunately for him, Lily and James took his teasing in good spirit.

The Gryffindors woke up on Saturday morning to sunlight flooding through the windows with the promise of nice day. The whole tower buzzed with expectancy: today was the Quidditch Final against Slytherin. Gryffindor were currently leading the Quidditch Cup by 80 points, followed by Slytherin, Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw and a win today would secure them the Cup. It was also Hogsmeade weekend, and most pupils were looking forward to spending their Saturday and Sunday afternoons relaxing in the village before the exams started.

Breakfast was a nervy affair for the Gryffindor team. Most of them could only nibble at slices of toast even though James had encouraged them all to eat. Poor Kevin Sharpe could only sip at a cup of tea, and even then you could hear the cup clattering against his teeth because his hands were shaking so much. Only Sirius could manage to eat a normal sized breakfast. James himself was too focussed on the game to concern himself with food. This was his first year as Gryffindor captain and he was determined to win the Cup. He knew that all of the school, except Slytherin, were behind Gryffindor all the way. Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw had proved that by loudly booing when the Slytherin team had walked in to breakfast en masse. He knew he was under pressure to catch the snitch early and kill the game, but he also knew his team was good enough to win.

Breakfast was over quickly, and most people stampeded out of the Great Hall and towards the Quidditch pitch in order to get good seats. James cleared his throat.

'Alright, team. Time to go.' The Gryffindor team, with the exception of James, moved off towards the changing room. Only James and Lily were left. Lily gently squeezed his fingers.

'Are you going to wish me luck?' he whispered to her.

'No,' she replied, 'you'll win, but it won't be luck. You'll win because you're the best Seeker on the best team!' He grinned at her.

'Thanks for the vote of confidence.'

'Well, how can you fail to win when I'll be sitting in the stand as your good luck mascot!' she joked. 'Come on,' she continued, pulling him out of the hall, 'it would never do for the captain to be late, would it?'

In the changing room James was giving his team a last minute pep talk.

'Ok team, this is it. The pinnacle of the season. The chance to end the season on a glorious high or sink like a stone. I know we can do it. We are the better players and the better flyers. Sirius and Matthew,' he said, looking at the two Beaters, 'you'll have to be on

your guard. The Slytherin Beaters both play dirty and they'll stop at nothing to try and knock us all off our brooms, so you'll have keep a close eye on them. But no fouling. We must play a clean game today. I don't want any fouls committed by us.' He turned to look at the Chasers. 'Flip and Julia. Play your usual game and we'll pulverise them in terms of goals. Their Chasers aren't a patch on you. Kevin, I know you're nervous but I also know as soon as you get on your broom you'll be fine and your nerves will disappear. You're an excellent player, anything short of excellent and you would never have got on the team!' James grinned at his third Chaser, who grinned back at the compliment. James then turned to his goalkeeper, who was an extremely tall and well-muscled Seventh year. 'Daniel. What can I say? Do your man-mountain thing and they'll find it nearly impossible to get past you.' He checked his watch and looked up at them. 'Time to go.' They left the changing room.

'Good luck, Flip.' said Sirius, coming up beside her and giving her a quick squeeze around the shoulder before bounding off. Phillipa stared after him and sighed. She didn't know what to think. On Wednesday, when she'd caught him staring at her she thought maybe he liked her, in the way that James liked Lily. But since then, nothing. No signs to indicate that at all! He'd reverted back into a clown, always joking with her, forever flirting but never staring at her with his dark, intense stare. Maybe she'd imagined it. The trouble was, since Wednesday, she'd started examining her own feelings for Sirius and she had forced herself to admit that, yes, she liked him. She liked him a lot. But telling him that was the one thing she couldn't do. Oh no, she wasn't going to risk making a complete arse of herself and the possibility of spoiling a good friendship by declaring her feelings. No, keeping quiet and hoping that her feelings would go away were the best she could hope for.

'Good luck, Flip.' said Sirius, coming up beside her. He couldn't resist giving her a quick hug before shooting off. What are you like? he asked himself disgustedly, you can't even keep your hands off her now! His angel and his devil prepared to do battle.

- Don't worry Sirius, it was only a friendly hug.

- No it wasn't! You did it because you fancy her! I know it and you know it!

- Why don't you just tell her you like her?

- What! And risk her laughing at you? Don't do it!

- Explain about the jokes and flirting. Tell her it's a cover for your real feelings.

- Oh right, Sirius. And you're not interested in what she keeps under her robes at all, are you?

'Oh shut up, the pair of you.' he muttered to himself. Ok, fine, I admit it. I like Flip, and I also know that the joking and the flirting are a cover. I've played the fool for so long I'm frightened to admit my true feelings in case she doesn't believe them. Frightened that she doesn't feel the same way. Frightened she'll want nothing to do with me if she finds out. So I'll go on keeping my feelings a secret, because being friends is better than nothing. And that's my last word on the subject!

The game had begun! Gryffindor got off to a flying start, with all 3 Chasers scoring in the first 5 minutes. Kevin's nerves had disappeared and he settled into the game straight away. As expected, the Slytherins were playing a dirty game, and one of their Beaters, Severus Snape, had flown straight into Chaser Julia Cartwright and nearly knocked her off her broom. Gryffindor had won a penalty, and it was converted into a goal by Phillipa. The other Slytherin Beater, David Dexter, seemed to be concentrating solely on James and the Gryffindor Beater Matthew Jordan was flying around him. That left Sirius with the task of trying to protect the Chasers. He looked up and saw Severus Snape. Snape was smiling his twisted smile and, taking aim, he swung his club and hurtled the Bludger towards Phillipa. Sirius charged forward and just managed to intercept it, and send it shooting towards Slytherin Chaser John Fletcher.

'Thanks, pal!' shouted Phillipa, before flying off.

'Anytime,' he replied softly, staring after her in an unguarded moment, his heart in his eyes. Unfortunately, and unknown to Sirius, Snape swooped past him at that exact moment. Now, in addition to being evil, bitter and twisted, Severus Snape also happened to be skilled in the art of putting two and two together. Looking at Sirius' expression, Snape promptly reached five.

Oh, so Black's got a thing for Phillipa Jones, has he? Well, well! I think I'll spice his game up a bit. And Snape, desperate for revenge on Sirius ploughed all his efforts into directing the Bludger at Phillipa and blocking her bodily. Sirius had his work cut out from protecting her from Snape. However, Snape's plan did have one drawback; whilst he was concentrating on trying to hurt Phillipa (and therefore Sirius) Kevin and Julia were unmarked and were scoring goals for fun.

The score was 80-20 in Gryffindor's favour. James was eagerly scanning the pitch, desperate for a glimpse of the snitch. This would be the perfect time for it to appear, he thought, deftly avoiding the Bludger shot at him by Dexter by flying up vertically before executing a perfect loop. Flying down, he suddenly caught sight of the snitch far below, hovering just a few feet above the ground. Crouched low across his broom he hurtled towards the snitch, closely followed by the Slytherin Seeker. But there was only going to be one winner in this race, and that was James. He reached the snitch first and grabbed at it, feeling the tiny wings fluttering against his fingers. A massive roar surrounded the pitch as Madam Hooch blew the whistle to end the game. Gryffindor had won the Cup!

High above the ground, Sirius shrieked with joy. He caught sight of Phillipa's grinning face and began flying towards her. But before he reached her, Severus Snape, unnoticed by everyone, had taken one last furious swipe at the Bludger and had sent it spinning violently towards her. Her mind on Sirius, Phillipa didn't notice the Bludger coming towards her until the very last second. She desperately tried to twist her body out of the way but it was too late – the Bludger smacked against her head with a sickening thud. Sirius, flying towards her as fast as he could, managed to catch her just as she slipped from her broom.

Flying slowly, Sirius reached the ground, one arm firmly clutching

Phillipa to his chest. He gently laid her down on the soft grass and examined her head where the Bludger had hit her. Feeling sick to his stomach, he found a big lump on the side of her head. The rest of the Gryffindor team rushed around them.

'What the hell happened?' shouted James, dropping to his knees besides Sirius.

'I don't know! I heard the whistle, and I was flying towards Flip and this Bludger just appeared out of nowhere. I couldn't reach her in time to knock it away—' Sirius trailed off shakily. God, she looked so white. Would she be ok? At that point Madam Hooch walked over and knelt down to examine her.

'Hmm,' she murmured, 'she'll need to go to Madam Pomfrey.' She glanced at Sirius' stricken face and said bracingly. 'Try not to worry, Black. I've seen this happen to many a Quidditch player, and they're always fine after a good night's sleep!' Sirius made to pick Phillipa up.

'Er, Sirius, it'll be easier if we use a stretcher,' suggested James.

'No!' said Sirius, 'I'll carry her up.'

'Sirius, be sensible—' began James, but Sirius cut him off.

'No James,' he said, his dark eyes burning in his pale face. 'It's something I want to do.' It suddenly became clear to James why it meant so much to Sirius. After all, he would feel the same if it was Lily who was lying there unconscious.

'Ok,' he replied softly. 'We'll follow you up in 15 minutes.' Flashing James a look of gratitude, Sirius slowly made his way towards the castle. Only Severus Snape was smiling.

Sirius made it to the hospital wing, and under Madam Pomfrey's instruction, gently laid Phillipa on an empty bed. By this time, she seemed to be drifting in and out of consciousness although she had made no attempt to speak.

'What has happened her?' demanded Madam Pomfrey. Sirius gabbled the story to her. Madam Pomfrey tutted in disapproval.

'The amount of children I've had in her with Quidditch injuries! That game should be banned from this school.' Sirius made no reply.

'Alright, Mr Black. You can leave now.' she continued.

'No!' he said, quite sharply. 'I want to stay until she wakes up. She needs me.' She looked at him and sighed.

'No, you silly boy. I want to pop her into bed, and I insist you leave while I do it.'

'Oh, sorry Madam Pomfrey. I didn't realise. I'll just wait outside until you're finished, shall I?' Blushing, he left the room and sat on a seat outside, his head in his hands.

Madam Pomfrey was fussing around Phillipa when she came around.

'What happened?' she whispered. Her head was pounding and she felt slightly sick.

'Well, my dear, according to your friend Mr Black, you were hit on the head during a Quidditch match.'

'Sirius?' she murmured. 'Where is he now?'

'I sent him outside to wait whilst I got you comfortable. He didn't want to leave you, actually. That's quite some friend you've got there. From what I can gather, not only did he save you from a far serious injury by catching you mid air, he also carried you here himself!' Bustling around the bed, Madame Pomfrey didn't notice the slight flush that had crept into Phillipa's cheeks. Maybe Sirius cared for her after all?

'Can Sirius come back in?' she asked weakly. She had to find out once and for all.

'Well, we'll see. Maybe for a few minutes, and only if he's quiet, and only after you've taken the medicine that I'm going to make up for you now. Until then, try and rest.' Madam Pomfrey swept out of the room.

Sirius was still sitting waiting when James, Lily, Remus and Lucy burst through the door. All four of them looked fit to burst.

'How is she?' asked Lily, with a worried look on her face.

'I think she'll be ok,' said Sirius. 'Madam Pomfrey's with her now.'

'You are not going to believe what Remus saw!' said James, making no attempt to conceal the disgust in his voice. 'Tell him, Remus.' Remus took up the tale, anger flashing from his eyes.

'Well, I was watching the pitch after the final whistle had gone, and I saw a Slytherin player hit the Bludger towards Flip, after the whistle had gone!' Sirius hissed in fury, and slammed his fist into the palm of his hand.

'You don't have to tell me who. It's got to be Snape, hasn't it?' Remus nodded his head in confirmation.

'But why?' pondered Sirius, 'He hasn't got a grudge with Flip' He was interrupted in his musings by Madam Pomfrey.

'You may go in for a few minutes, Mr Black. I must insist you do nothing to upset her, though.' Sirius nodded, and moved towards the door.

'Can't we go in too?' asked Lucy.

'No, I'm afraid only one of you may go in at the moment.' she replied.

'Oh but__' Lucy made to argue, but was silenced by James' hand on her

arm.

'Let Sirius go in,' he said quietly.

Sirius approached the bed quietly. The curtains weren't pulled around the bed, as Phillipa was the only patient in the room. He sat down on the chair and looked at her. Her face had more colour to it, but her eyes were still closed. He gently reached for her hand and pulled it towards his face, holding it softly against his cheek.

'Flip,' he whispered, but as he looked into her face he saw no response. He sighed, and began speaking to her quietly.

'Phillipa, I know you're sleeping and won't hear this but this is probably the only chance I'll ever have to speak to you like this. The thing is, if I told you this when you were awake you'd never believe me, the fact that I, Sirius the joker has completely lost his head and his heart to you. I know I'm always teasing you, and making er, improper suggestions to you but I don't mean it, really I don't.'

'What, not even the one where you dream about me, or the Vanishing Solution idea. You didn't mean that either?' His eyes shot to her face. Her eyes were wide open and there was a grin playing about her lips.

'Flip!' he blustered, desperately trying to think on his feet and dropping her hand like a hot potato. 'I think you misunderstood me, you must be delirious, crazy even__'

'Crazy about you, Sirius.' she whispered, secure now in the knowledge that he felt the same as she did. She gently picked up his hand and brought it to her lips, kissing the palm of it. He shuddered in pleasure.

'Flip,' he whispered hoarsely, 'do you mean it? I'll die if you don'tâ€|'

' I meant every single word,' she murmured back.

'I've got a confession to make,' said Sirius, his gaze burning into her. 'When I said I didn't mean those improper suggestions, I lied. It's my ambition in life to cover your robes in Vanishing Solutionâ€|' She laughed huskily.

'Kiss me Sirius.'

'What about your head? Is it ok? I'm dying to kiss you but I don't want to hurt you.'

'Madam Pomfrey's medicine worked a treat. My headache's practically gone.'

'In that caseâ€|' he murmured, lowering his head and kissing her with an intensity that shook them both.

'Would you come for a walk with me later?' he asked. 'We could go down to the lake, maybe talk or something.'

'I'll tell you what,' she suggested with a wicked grin. 'Let's not

bother talking, but just do 'something' instead!' He laughed delightedly.

'Flip, you're my kind of girl!'

Sunday afternoon, after lunch, and we find our friends down by the lake.

'Right,' said Remus, 'does everyone know what they have to do?'

'Yes!' they all shouted together. The plan to wreak revenge on Snape had been thought of by Remus, and it had been planned with military precision.

'To Hogsmeade we go,' said Phillipa gleefully, rubbing her hands together in anticipation.

Hogsmeade on Sunday afternoon was packed. As well as the students and teachers from Hogwarts, the streets were bustling with the villagers as well. James, Sirius, Lily and Phillipa stood in the middle of the street, searching for their pray. They didn't have long to wait â€" walking out of Honeydukes, his hands full of chocolate frogs and Fizzing Whizzbees, was Severus Snape. He glowered as he saw the four, and tried to walk past them but James and Sirius blocked his way.

'Hungry, Severus?' asked James lightly. Snape sneered at him, and looked down his large, hooky nose.

'What's it to you Potter?' he snapped in reply. 'I've got nothing to say to any of you so just get out of my way!'

'Well, the way I look at it Snape, you've got two people you should be apologising to. Flip, for that cowardly attack on her yesterday and Lily, for pouncing on her last Tuesday.' said Sirius, casually picking his thumbnail as he spoke.

'Me, apologise? Have you lost your wits, Black? All I've got to say to you Jones, if you can't stand the pace on the Quidditch pitch you shouldn't play. And you Johnston, you loved every minute of last Tuesday. She's quite the hot little number, Potter, don't you agree?' James fought to keep control of himself, and the only emotion he betrayed was the clenching of his fists by his side. Lily laid a calming hand on his arm.

'So,' said Sirius, softly, 'you're refusing to apologise?'

'You're quick today, Black, aren't you?' spat Snape.

'Well, we can't force you, I suppose, but I am disappointed in you Severus.' replied Sirius.

'Quite frankly Black, I couldn't give a monkey's chuff! Now get out of the bloody way!' The four obligingly moved out of his path and he swept past them, muttering angrily to himself. James waited until he was out of earshot.

'Any problems, Remus?' he asked quietly. And Remus, underneath James' Invisibility Cloak with Lucy and standing about six feet behind the

other four snorted with laughter.

'None whatsoever! That curse should work a treat, I can't wait to see it.' he replied.

'Well remember, the pair of you must keep under the cloak or your alibis will be ruined,' said Sirius, beginning to laugh himself. 'Come on, let's watch the fun!' The six of them, two invisible, moved up the street following Snape.

At first, Snape didn't realise anything was wrong. Then he became dimly aware that his trousers and shirt felt rather tight around the waist. Putting that down to overeating at lunchtime, he continued walking down the street. Bloody hell, he thought to himself, it's not just the waist where my trousers are tight. In fact, Severus was experiencing extreme chafing in a rather personal area of his trousers, and he was finding it a bit difficult to walk! Pulling his robes aside, he discreetly tried to adjust himself. He glanced down and screeched in horror. No wonder his trousers were tight. He wasn't getting fatter, his clothes were shrinking! Already his robes were creeping past his knees and a loud rip and a sense of freedom down below told him that his trousers had ripped at the seams. His shoulders were bulging through his shirt and the neck was so tight he felt he was being garrotted. There was only one thing he could do – groping under his robes he unfastened his rapidly shrinking shirt and threw it down on the ground. Well, at least he could breathe now! But breathing was the least of his problems. He saw his reflection in a shop window and nearly died outright with embarrassment. His trousers had finally given up the struggle and lay, ripped and torn, at his feet. His robes were now hip length and he looked like a transvestite in a mini dress. He was also aware that his strange garb had attracted a big audience, most of them Hogwarts students and all of them laughing. He sunk to the ground and hid his head in his hands, trying to minimise his shame. This had to be the work of Potter and Black.

'Severus Snape! Is that you?' barked an angry voice. Oh no, MacGonagall, he thought, that's all I need. He stood up slowly, trying to ignore the laughter and heckles.

'Snape! Cover yourself up boy!' Snape snatched off his cloak (which had thankfully stopped shrinking!) and wrapped it around his waist. It fell in fetching folds to his knees. His face was burning with humiliation.

'Please explain yourself,' said Professor MacGonagall, her voice cold.

'It must have been Potter and Black!' he shrieked, all dignity lost. 'They were talking to me and then this happened! They've obviously put a hex on me!' He was spitting with rage.

'Mr Potter and Mr Black. Stand forward please!' she requested. James and Sirius moved forward both of them laughing themselves silly.

'Did you or did you not put a curse on Mr Snape?' she asked icily.

'No professor.' 'Absolutely not, professor.' They sniggered

noisily.

'Well, Mr Snape, it appears you are wrong. These boys__'

'No!' he shrieked wildly. 'They're lying!'

'Professor, if I could interrupt?' It was the voice of Jonathan Winter, Seventh year Gryffindor and Head Boy of Hogwarts. 'I heard the conversation between the three of them, and in no way were Potter and Black intimidating Snape, and I witnessed no hex taking place.' MacGonagall smiled at the Head Boy.

'Thank you, Jonathan. Well Mr Snape, it would appear you are wrong in your accusations.'

'Lupin!' shouted Snape. 'Lupin wasn't with them! He could have been hiding somewhere and hexed me!' MacGonagall sighed. Really, Severus Snape was such a tiresome boy!

'Mr Lupin, stand forward please.' she called out wearily. Remus moved forward, Lucy by his side. The Invisibility Cloak was tucked away in Lucy's robes.

'Where were you when this alleged hex took place?' she questioned him.

'I was with Lucy Watson.' he told her.

'Yes, but where were you?' she asked again.

'Well, I'd rather not say, professor, if you don't mind.'

'But I do mind, Mr Lupin or I wouldn't of asked you. Now where were you?'

Lucy grinned mischievously and spoke up herself.

'We were kissing behind the Shrieking Shack, professor.' The crowd burst into renewed laughter at MacGonagall's shocked face. She flicked her wand at Snape and restored his robes back to full length.

'Mr Snape, I would like you to accompany me back to the castle where we can have a nice long chat about your recent conduct. Come!' And she walked through the crowd, Snape dragging his heels after her.

The six friends burst into fresh laughter and staggered off to find a quiet corner where they could talk freely about their prank. Sirius guffawed loudly.

'I must say Remus, that was a great alibi you and Lucy made up!' he said.

'Did we?' asked Remus, with a smile on his face.

'Did you what?' asked Sirius, with some confusion.

'Did we make it up?' said Lucy wickedly.

'Well, didn't you?' asked James doubtfully. They both smiled but didn't answer. Remus stood up.

'Lucy, would you do me the honour of joining me in a butterbeer?'

Lucy stood up quickly. 'Remus, I can think of nothing more pleasant.' She linked her arm in his and they strolled off together in the direction of The Three Broomsticks.

'Well, there's a turn up for the books.' said James eventually.

'Actually,' said Sirius offhandedly, 'I was thinking of trying to get those two together anyway.'

'Thank God they managed it without your intervention!' retorted James. He stood up and pulled Lily to her feet. 'Come on, let's go and join them.' Sirius and Phillipa stood up as well and the four of them set off after Remus and Lucy.

We leave them there, sipping butterbeer in The Three Broomsticks, happily toasting life and love.

A/N â€" Sorry it's so long!

End
file.